

LEADERSHIP AND CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA: A PRECIPITATING FACTOR FOR NIGERIA'S UNDERDEVELOPMENT

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Abstract :

The major objective of states is to provide a convincing development administration that will guaranty the political utility of their citizenry. This paper however, is a critical approach to analysing the nature of leadership in Nigeria and the way corruption has become a beautifying cosmetic in Nigerian politics and administration. The paper analyses the various ways through which corruption is entrenched in Nigerian government and politics and its general implication for Nigeria's socio-political and economic continuity. By adopting literatures from library research, the paper is descriptive and analytical in nature, based on secondary methodological influence. Findings show that corruption in leadership is a major impediment to the survival of socio political and economic formations. The paper concludes that development is only obtainable in a healthy political environment that is devoid of corruption. The paper recommends a drastic interpretation of the law on corrupt government officials found guilty of corruption so as to sanitize the political atmosphere, among other things.

Keywords: *leadership; corruption; development; administration; socio-political; economic epilepsy.*

1. Introduction

The emergence of any socio-economic and political formation is the emergence of the quest for leadership. A state, nation or an organization cannot survive without not only leadership, but good and responsive leadership. With the independence of Nigeria in 1960, the country has passed through all sorts of political upheavals, economic logjam and socio cultural violence all attributed to bad leadership.

With the hitherto struggle against colonial subjugation of Nigeria, an assembly of great men has been moving closely with the British officials and the queen of England to make sure that independence was a reality to Nigerians. But after the attainment of self-government, Nigeria began to experience a series of political turmoil. The first republic was shoved in a cold blooded military coup which paved a room for regional and ethnic tension in the country. The result of military leadership was an unconstitutional leadership; they were answerable to themselves; easy to take advantage of the peoples' civil rights; citizens became slaves in the hands of their new colonial masters.

Similarly, the militarized Nigerian regimes were hostile, dictatorial and rude. Their hunger was strictly on power and their nature was clearly authoritarian. The government came first, then the people. This classical approach of leadership ensured that the rule was to be obeyed without question or violation regardless of how it undermined the emotions and civil rights of Nigerians.

The basic fact about leadership in Nigeria today is that, the colonial leadership is far better than the military regimes of Nigeria. To expand this argument, we must all remember when people were forced to school, but under Nigerian military regimes and even the so called democratic regimes, Nigerians are forced out of schools. It is in line with this that Eke (1998) wrote:

It is shocking to note that some Nigerians actually have come to believe, and with good cause, that the colonial authorities did not treat Nigerians as badly as the Nigerian military has done. After all, under both situations, Nigerians had no right to vote, the political actors were not elected and were not accountable to Nigerians, and personal freedoms were severely limited.

Leadership factor in Nigeria has been a great failure to the leaders and Nigerians. Collapsed economic institutions, bribery and corruption, decadent educational institutions, insecurity, lack of social infrastructure, tarnished reputation on international stage are some of the basic features of Nigeria vis-à-vis leadership. The nature of leadership in the country has resulted in bad economic policies with greater implication: the level of unemployment has risen which also gave rise to social vices such as terrorism, juvenile delinquency, child labor, drug and human trafficking, prostitution, armed robbery and corruption in Nigeria.

The original contract of safeguarding the people and their property has become breached, and the security agencies are also vulnerable due to the nature of corrupt leadership in Nigeria. The removal of oil subsidy has become a curse on Nigerians and even the leaders. Nigerians are suffering from the subsidy removal, while leaders implicitly tempted not to be honest in their probe about the misappropriation of the subsidy to be benefited by Nigerians.

This paper, however, is divided into four parts. The first part, seeks to provide a theoretical and practical reality approach to the concept of leadership in Nigeria. The second part discusses the nature of corruption and processes of corruption among political office holders, civil servants, and how corruption has become rampant in Nigeria. The third part of this paper analyses the concept of national development in contemporary global economic system. It explains some of the basic features and characteristics of development. The fourth part of this paper is a cohesive interpretation and relationship that exists between leadership, corruption and national development, which produces a rather epileptic outcome than national development.

Material and Method

The material used in this research is the library literature from documented print materials such as text books, journals, news papers, periodicals and reports. This methodology is in the field of research regarded as the secondary method of data collection.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Leadership: A Normative Theoretical Clarification: The concept of leadership in Nigeria especially at national level, envisages an individual or group of individuals that would be responsible for law making, law implementation, law interpretation, overseeing the activities of government ministries, parastatals, commissions, and representing Nigeria at different capacity inside and outside the country. It is also the involvement of capable people that have the ability to head the mass media, political parties, educational institutions, labor organizations, traditional institutions and even religious groups.

Before the appointment, selection or voting for a leader, there are some basic considerations that need to be made. The factors that need to be considered according to trait analytical submission may include: (a) intelligence (b) adjustment (c) extraversion (d) conscientiousness (e) openness to experience (f) self efficacy. These qualities are some how missing among Nigerian leaders.

Leaders must be intelligent to deliver whatever responsibility given to them (Kenny and Zaccaro, 1983). They must calculate possibility of making things done with projective thinking and in depth calculation of probability. They must be able to apply practical knowledge in making sure that the desired goal is fully achieved. Intelligence is a bio-psychological approach to the study of an individual leader (Gardner, 1999) which deals with various abilities, such as Spatial, Linguistic, Logical-mathematical, Bodily-kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalistic ability (Vernon, 1950; Carroll, 1993). A good leader must have the above abilities to make him distinguished from followers.

A leader must be able to adjust himself in a changing environment, new economic situation, societal issues, political problem and even psychological changes, to make himself fit in any socio-economic and political changes. For Roger (1983:315), a leader must be able to identify existing problems and future opportunities; he must be able to know and understand various processes of institutional adjustment (Lord, 1986).

Extroversion is one unavoidable trait in the personality of a leader. A leader must be strong, confident and be able to interact with others. Jung (1995) has been the greatest proponent of extroversion-introversion theory. Albeit every man has some traits of extroversion and introversion, a leader must not remain within the circle of introversion or ambiversion, but rather, remain proactive and interactive (Goldeberg, 1992; Saucier, 1994; Eysenck, 1967). Leaders are assertive, they are expressive, they talk to the understanding of the people and they are enthusiastic (Arvey, Rotundo, Johnson, Zhang and Mcgue, 2006).

Consciousness is one basic quality that a leader must possess. It deals with awareness, thought, perception and the senses of what is outside and inside of the mind (Judge, Bono, Ilies and Gerhardt, 2002). In other words, consciousness deal with the ability to experience or to feel, wakefulness and in fact, it is the executive control system of the mind (John, 2005).

One basic feature of Nigerian leaders is that, they are more conservative in defending and maintaining an existing socio-economic and political status quo. Thus, Nigeria has remained stagnant in all aspects of living. A good leader must have the quality of openness to new experience and must always be ready to accommodate changes whenever they emerge. Learning how to lead people results from our reflections on our experiences, as we strive to make sense of it. We can directly sense smells, tastes, and the like, and have visceral reactions (e.g., danger), but we also confront situations which leave us challenged, puzzled, or confused (Dewey, 1938). Through our encounters with the world and our reflections upon these experiences, our current understandings of the world are transformed so that things make more sense (Tagger and Hackett, 1999).

Contrary to the judgment passed on Nigerian leaders, self efficacy deals with the competence of an individual to accept and execute a particular task and achieve the desired goals (Ormrod, 2006). Nigerian leaders lead Nigerians even when they are not competent, and they are not interested at achieving the goal of national development. In other words, self efficacy is a belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations. One's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks, and challenges (Banduras, 1977). Leaders with high self-efficacy, that is, those who believe they can perform well, are more likely to view difficult tasks as something to be mastered rather than something to be avoided (Kickul and Neuman, 2000; Smith and Foti, 1998; Foti and Hausenstein, 2007).

The Nigerian State, Corruption and Leadership

The concept of corruption is a plethora one, with divergent interpretation. It some times explains the violation of public trust, embezzlement, bribery and having an official doing what contradicts organizational rules and regulations. It is also seen as the abuse of public office for private gains (Ackerman, 1996:83). But for clearer perception, James and David (2006:798) have made us to think of: (a) Someone on the government payroll who did no work for the pay (b) A police officer accepted money not to write a traffic ticket (c) A citizen claimed government benefits to which he or she was not entitled (d) An official gave a contract to a campaign contributor without considering other contractors (e) An elected official with many wealthy backers supported a tax cut that largely benefited the rich (f) An elected official raised campaign funds while inside his or her government office (g) Voters supported a candidate for office in return for a promise to fix potholes on their street (h) An official recommended an out-of-work friend for a government Job (i) a political candidate running for public office took a \$500 donation from a wealthy business owner.

In the critical interpretation of the concept of corruption, Heidenheimer (1993:25) has held the view of Montesquieu who saw corruption as the dysfunctional process by which a good political order is perverted into evil one and a monarchy into despotism. Heidenheimer (1993) also analyzed the view of Rosseau in political corruption. He believes that political corruption is a necessary consequence of the struggle for power. He therefore argued: "that man had been corrupted by social and political life. It is not the corruption of man which destroyed the political system but the political system which corrupts and destroys man."

In his comparative analysis of corruption, Heidenheimer (1993:25) posits that there is an agreement between the views of Rosseau and Lord Acton that "all powers tend to corrupt and absolute powers corrupt absolutely." Lord Acton is focused on the moral depravity which power is believed to cause in man, "they no longer think about what is right action or manner, but only about which is expedient action or manner." Heidenheimer (1993:16).

According to Fredrich (1972:18) "Corruption is a kind of behavior which deviates from the norm actually prevalent or behaved to prevail in a given context, such as the political. It is deviant behavior associated with a particular motivation, namely that of private gain at public expense." So he stated the concept of corruption in a way that constitutes a break of law or of standards of high moral conduct. Klavaren (1954:25) defines corruption as the exploitation of the public.

But in the Nigerian context however, we also need to consider giving out a contract with returns expected; giving a contract to an incompetent contractor because he is a family friend; giving out contracts without monitoring and evaluation; collecting money for a job, which is the officer's responsibility; collecting money to offer admission in to academic institutions of learning; collecting money to pass an already failed student in an examination and many more instances and manners under which corruption manifest itself.

There is the need to understand the rationale behind continuation of an officer or a public office holder caught in a corruption scandal. There is also need to understand party's backing and or protection of its corrupt members in office. The root cause of corruption must be dealt with and some possible ways to curtail the level of corruption among government and non governmental officials must be considered. The issue of corruption is also universal. It cuts across the globe; it occurs even in the most developed nations of the world. Republican Congressman Duke

Cunningham resigns after pleading guilty to bribery. House Majority Leader Tom DeLay is indicted and forced to relinquish his leadership position and later resigns from Congress. House Democrat William Jefferson is stripped of his position on the Ways and Means Committee after an FBI raid of his congressional office and amid reports that he hid \$90,000 in alleged bribes in a freezer at his home (James and David, 2006:797)

Factors That Promote Corruption in Nigeria

In dealing with corruption and factors that promote corruption in a state, Vito (1998:4-12) has outlined some of the factors that cause, gravitate or promote corruption as follows:

- (a) Nature of bureaucracy: this comes from the philosophy of Weber (1947) when he discussed on the ideal type of bureaucracy. Some bureaucracies are ideal why some are not. The rigid and drastic obedience to written laws may do away with corruption, while contrary to this, some bureaucracies are loose and laws are personalized. In this type of working environment, corruption is unavoidable.
- (b) Quality of public sector wages: a country with relatively good quality of working condition as well as high quality of wages, corruption will be less in such societies.
- (c) Penalty system of the country: if penalty for corrupt individuals is harsh enough to discourage them from being indulged, the society would be sanitized by the penalty system, as people would run away from the punitive measures. While if the penalty system is not hard enough to drive people away from corruption, people will even choose corruption as a means of livelihood.
- (d) Institutional control: the emphasis on this approach is that, there is assurance that all relevant institutions that deal with corrupt practices are ever ready and honest to arrest and prosecute offenders; people will run away from committing such offences.
- (e) Ambiguity of rules and written laws: if laws and rules are ambiguous, or not available to the public, more damage will be committed as a result of lack of awareness, lack of clear regulations governing a particular action of an individual.
- (f) Leadership by example: if political leaders do not ascribe to such actions of corruption, favoritism, nepotism, the employees will not resort to it or practice such corrupt behavior. This is leadership by example.
- (g) Decline in morals and ethics
- (h) Greed and the desire for self enrichment
- (i) Socio-economic conditions such as poverty and unemployment
- (j) Institutional reason, such as weak checks and balances and proper auditing

But for Treisman (2000:402-406), there are many factors that cause corruption all over the world. These factors are presented with conditional variables as if a country is democratic, the level of corruption will be lower and vice versa. These factors are: (a) if the effectiveness of a legal system is higher, corruption will be lower especially in countries with common law systems (b) corruption will be lower in democratic countries and those with a freer press and more vigorous civic associations (c) corruption will be lower in more economically developed countries, where populations are more educated and literate, and where the normative separation between 'public' and 'private' is clearer (d) corruption will be lower in countries with higher relative salaries in public office (e) corruption will be higher where political instability is greater (f) corruption will be higher in countries with greater state intervention in will be higher in countries with large endowments of valuable natural resources (g) corruption will be lower the greater the country's exposure to competition from imports (h) corruption (i) corruption will be greater in countries that are more ethnically divided.

Some Major Historical Cases of Corruption in Nigeria

It was established prior to Nigeria's independence that, corruption cases were mostly electoral in nature and traditionally oriented. Corruption allegations were leveled against some officials of Borno native authority (Robert, 1993). Subsequently, British administrative officers were also accused of corrupt practices in the results of elections which enthroned a [Fulani](#) political leadership in [Kano](#), which showed a clear electoral irregularity.

The Independence era

With Nigeria's attainment of independence, corruption charges were also leveled against Azikiwe for questionable corrupt practices. In 1944, a firm belonging to Azikiwe and family bought a Bank in [Lagos](#). The bank was procured to strengthen local control of the financial industry. Albeit, a report about transactions carried out by the bank showed though Azikiwe had resigned as chairman of the bank, the current chairman was an agent of his. The report wrote that most of the paid-up capital of the African Continental Bank were from the Eastern Regional Financial Corporation (Robert, 1993).

This trend of corruption in Nigeria has become hereditary. Both pre-independence and independence era are being regarded as the most impeccable era of Nigerian history in terms of political sanctity and morality (though enveloped by ethnic and regional rivalry). Leaders were seen as the most nationalistic and sacrosanct in their dealings with public affairs. In western Nigeria, politician [Adegoke Adelabu](#) was investigated following charges of political corruption leveled against him by the opposition. The report led to demand for his resignation as district council head. In 1962, Chief Obafemi Awolowo was indicted and the Coker commission of enquiry was set-up which found that a substantial amount of money was misappropriated from the coffers of the Western regional government (Robert, 1993).

It was also reported in the cocoa-rich western region, when investigators discovered a drastic financial crime committed by politicians and businessmen, which drained the region's marketing board of more than 10 million naira (David and Okafor, 2009:70-90). Throughout that period government contracts, purchases, and loan programmes were systematically manipulated in siphoning public fund and by self enrichment of greedy politicians of the region.

The first military regimes

Despite the crusade against bribery and corruption, the Gowon administration has been described as one of the regimes that could not fight corruption in the country. Some of the peculiar characteristics of the regime were: Graft, bribery, nepotism "gift" giving through which influence and authority were asserted. It was reported that In 1973, the federal government established a special anticorruption police force called the "XSquad", whose subsequent investigations showed ingenious forms of extortion and fraud not only in government and public corporations but in private business and in the professions in general.

1. One bewildering corruption scandal was revealed in the mid-1970s; it involved the "purchase abroad of construction materials by state agents at prices well above market values. Rake-offs were pocketed by public officials and private contractors". Other scandals in hospitals and orphanages shocked the populace, while corruption in importing medical drugs whose effective dates long since had expired revealed that even the health of Nigerians was at risk (Falola and Heaton, 2008:185-195).
2. It also transpired that in mid 1975, 400 cargo ships and about 250 of them carrying 1.5 million tons of cement clogged the harbor of Lagos, which had been paralyzed for fifteen months with vessels waiting to be unloaded. To compound the error, spoiled and inferior-grade cement was concealed by mixing it with acceptable material for use in public building projects. Later, buildings collapsed or had to be dismantled because of the inferior product. New roads washed away because of bad construction and inadequate controls. In these scandals, as in others, the culprits were a combination of Nigerian businessmen, government officials, and foreign companies. Few people and few projects seemed exempt from the scourge (Chizoba and Madueke, 2010:30-39).

The Regime of Murtala Muhammed

The erring officers of Gowon regime were later sacked by Murtala administration (Aluko, 1977) in his attempt to sanitize the civil service in the Country. The regime of Murtala was a watershed in laying the foundation of transparency in leadership, by sincerely fighting corruption and abuse of public office (Chizoba and Madueke, 2010:39-45). The regime did not last long, but before his assassination, Murtala had started making programs for political transition in to democratic rule. It was same preparation to democracy that Obasanjo continued, and finally brought Shagari to power.

3. The Shagari Regime

4. Shagari administration has been one of the worst regimes with financial gladiators in Nigeria. When an investigation panel started probing some suspicious corrupt practices, few federal buildings mysteriously went on fire after investigators started probe on the finances of the officials working in the buildings (Leon, 1983)

Secondly, in the late 1985, a probe into the collapse of the hitherto [Johnson Mathey Bank](#) of [London](#) paved a way to the discovery of some of the abuses carried out during the second republic. The bank acted as an intermediary to transfer hard currency for some party members in Nigeria. A few leading officials and politicians siphoned Nigerian money which they sought to transfer out of the country with the help of Asian importers by issuing import licenses.

Thirdly, it was revealed in 1981 that, a Rice shortage, led to accusations of corruption against the NPN government. The case was alleged to be protectionist in nature, as after Shagari's election, his government decided to protect the local rice farmer from imported commodities. A licensing system was created to limit the amount

of rice import. But accusations of favoritism and government supported speculation were leveled against many officials (Juan,1981).

Corruption and Re-emergence of the Military-Buhari

Buhari emerged to correct the anomalies and corrupt practices of Shagari regime. The second republic being one of the most corrupt governments Nigeria ever had, Buhari was faced with a challenge of arresting the corrupt officials of Shagari administration. The tribunals set up in May 1984 by the Buhari regime to try the corrupt former ministers, governors, and politicians had revealed many misappropriation of public fund. For example between July 5 and 9 1983, Chief Bisi Onabanjo, the former governor of Ogun State, together with two other governors were found guilty for soliciting illicit side payments totaling 2.8 million naira. The other governors were acquitted, but Chief Onabanjo was sentenced to 22 years in prison (David and Okafor, 2009:7090).

Some other governors from different regions were also indicted of different levels of corruption and they were equally imprisoned. Other cases of prosecution included Umaru Dikko, the transport and aviation minister in the second republic that fled to Britain. He was alleged to have amassed a fortune of over one billion US dollars during barely three years in office. Justice Sampson Uwaifo tribunal for instance reported that it recovered over 200 million Naira in cash, real estate and vehicles, and more than 35 million naira from politicians, public officers, and contractors. There was also the fraud at the ministry of telecommunication where the government was losing 50 million naira per month (David and Okafor, 2009:70-90).

Babangida, Abacha and Abdussalami Administration

Corruption in Nigeria under these two regimes had gathered momentum. The two regimes had ways of welcoming and accommodating corruption. For example, Babangida's administration pardoned and released the second republic politicians that were jailed for corruption by the Buhari regime. He also returned their confiscated properties to them. This trend, however, has made critics to make the inference that the regime had legalized corruption. The Okigbo panel report revealed that Babangida established a 'dedicated account' into which the windfall from the first gulf war was paid. The account held the sum of 12.4 billion US dollars but at the time of enquiry only 206 million dollars were left there. The two people who managed the accounts were Babangida and the then governor of Central Bank, the late Alhaji Abdulkadir Ahmed (David and Okafor, 2009:87).

The Abacha regime was not an exception. He treated the Nigerian Central Bank like a family property; He issued cheques of billions of naira whenever he wished to; He was listed among the ten most corrupt world leaders with 2-5 billion US dollars loot. There was 4 billion US dollars looted money in which the UK financial services authority indicted fifteen British banks, and the 4-5 billion US dollars secret Nigerian debt buyback scheme. In addition, there was the 2.5 billion US dollars Ajaokuta steel debt buyback scam involving Abacha's minister. Others included 80 million US dollars over payment to Chase Manhattan Bank, 10 million US dollars reversal payment on Paris Club debts and 27 million US dollars to SACE of Italy (David and Okafor, 2009:87).

Abdulsalam was also accused of looting Nigerian treasury, which transpired in his Maizube Holdings, which is a collection of various businesses (farms, estates and all sorts of companies). One of his most recent establishments is the building of MAIZUBE Estate in Abuja, Nigeria. The estate has recently been leased/rented by Total for its staff. In order not to be discovered, Abdulsalam gave Israeli expatriates billions of naira to a construction that Nigeria could easily have done. The Israelis eventually sub-contracted every aspect of the construction to Nigerian builders, architects, engineers, painters, etc. They only paid out only 1/8 of what they were earned from general Abdulsalam (Molulu, 2011).

Obasanjo/Yar'adua Regime

The corrupt practices of Obasanjo regime were more severe and worse than the corrupt practices of Abacha regime (Infostrides, 2011) as asserted by the former chairman of economic and financial crime commission (EFCC).

A popular human right activist, Gani Fawehinmi is of the view that Obasanjo regime will go down in history as the most corrupt regime in the history of Nigeria. In the sense that no regime ever made so much money as was made under Obasanjo's regime. It got to a point that the price of one barrel of crude oil was fetching \$70 and Nigeria at that time was producing 3,150,000 (three million, one hundred and fifty thousand) barrels per day. The Federal Government was making more than N200,000,000 (two hundred million dollars) everyday, including Sunday. The more money the Obasanjo regime made the poorer the Nigerian people became. And the more money the Obasanjo regime made, the richer a few people became, including Mr. President himself (Sahara Reporters, June-1, 2007). Eight years of self-centred disposition, eight years of wayo, eight years of deception, eight years of creating a few rich people, eight years of anti-masses programmes, eight years of deliberate junketing all over the

world, eight years of make-believe, eight years of dictatorship, eight years of lack of coherent policies, eight years of so much wealth coming to the hands of government out of which Nigerians received aggravated poverty and economic pain (Sahara Reporters, June-1, 2007).

Obasanjo regime has emerged in an era Nigerians had lost hope in the country, thinking the new leader would make a difference. But as time went on, Obasanjo turned to be the worst, despite his campaign on anticorruption. Yar'adua tried to maintain the fight on corruption but he was criticized of inefficiency and slow governance.

The Jonathan Era Jonathan succeeded Yar'adua after the demise of the president. But Jonathan regime has been seen as not only one of the most incompetent, but the most corrupt regime in the Nigerian political history. Governors, members of legislature, local government chairmen, civil servants are all corrupt under Jonathan administration.

5. The government of President Goodluck Jonathan has also been described as the most treacherous regime in the history of Nigeria based on the allegation of N155 billion naira Malabu Oil scam swelling around President Jonathan. The corruption going on under Jonathan's government is also seen as unparalleled in Nigeria's history. Over \$1 billion involved in the Malabu oil scam (Sahara Reporters, May, 2012).
6. It is under the Jonathan's regime that even the judiciary could not determine and judge corrupt government officials, albeit, this has been a judicial tradition in Nigeria. It was a great discovery when a British court sentenced James Ibori, the former governor of a Nigerian oil state, to 13 years in prison last month for embezzling 50 million pounds (\$79 million). This was not enough, when Nigerians came out to protest the removal of oil subsidy, Nigerians saw a move by the government to bring the Nigerian masses down. It was not too long for Nigerians to wipe their tiers, when a \$6.8 billion fuel subsidy corruption scandal erupted. Those in charge of the discovery of the corruption were also corrupt.
7. Cases of corruption have been revealed, such as the case of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Police Pension Funds. But these two are nothing but a tip of the iceberg; what is submerged under is far beyond our imagination (Kaka, 2012). By the time we realize that year in year out, we budget N4 trillion, approaching N5 trillion, annually and we now go to the rudiment of how we generate that revenue, then, all of us will weep for this country. About 2.5 million barrels per day of oil is being declared at above \$100 per barrel which is not up to 50 per cent of what is being lifted from our oil reserve. That means equivalent of what is being declared is being taken away through illegal bunkering (Kaka, 2012).
8. On abandoned projects, officials of the government are emerging to be an intervening variable, as projects awarded are corruptly handled. It is discerning that between 2010 and 2012, the Federal Executive Council (FEC) approved about 100 projects apparently to improve the development of the country and enhance the living conditions of its citizens. However, virtually all the projects have either been abandoned or not completed on schedule, despite the huge sums of money allocated for the projects. Instances of such projects have been revealed by SERAP, 2012), which are:
 9. 1. Contract for the Phase 1 Bwari-Kau Road on the outskirts of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT): The FEC approved N3, 886,099,514.93 in December 2010. Although the completion date for the project is December 2012, work has not yet started on the project several months after, and despite release of money to contractors. The road thus remains a death-trap, contributing to unnecessary loss of innocent lives and consequently violation of the constitutional and international human right of the citizens to life.
 10. 2. Contract for three Solid Waste Transfer Stations at Mpape, Apo and Kubwa in the FCT: This project was awarded by the FEC in January 2011 for N2, 957, 572, 096.35 but no work has started yet on the project. In fact, many of the residents in the areas said they have never heard of such a project.
 11. 3. Contract for the supply of 60, 000 units of 240 litres Plastic British Waste Bins: The project was approved by the FEC in September 2010 for N927, 600,000. The bins were meant for the streets of Abuja. But about two years after, the bins are nowhere to be found.
 12. 4. Contract for the provision of engineering infrastructure to Maitama Extension District, Abuja: The project was approved by FEC in April 2011 for N23, 650 billion, and due to be completed in May 2014. To date, no real work has commenced on the project
 13. 5. Contract for the National Library and Cultural Centre: This project was approved by FEC in March 2010 for N17,005 billion. No tangible work is noticeable on site, and the project is very unlikely to be completed on time, if at all.
 14. 6. Contract for the Nigeria Cultural Centre and Millennium Tower Projects: The project was approved by the FEC for N18.998billion but has no specified time for its completion.
- 15.
- 16.

17. Conceptualizing National Development

Development is a multi dimensional concept. Scholars have tried to see it beyond roads construction, the establishment of airports, seaports, tall buildings, economic growth, etc ((Huq, 1975; Fagerlind and Saha, 1989; Myrdal, 1972). The international community adopted the term *development* to describe the sequence of economic growth of the nations of the Third World (Huq, 1975). The developing nations and the international community now recognize the concept from the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly during the proclamation of the Second United Nations Development Decade on January 1, 1971 (UN, 1971). The UN declared the following elements as basic to development:

(1) A minimum standard of living compatible with human dignity (2) underpinned improvement of the wellbeing of the individual (3) Sharing of benefits by society at large (4) More equitable distribution of wealth and income and wealth (5) A greater degree of income security, and (6) The safeguard of the environment.

Although some of the indicators such as “minimum standard of living compatible with human dignity” seem to be vague, it is clear that the United Nations’ indicators comprise the whole gamut of a country’s economic, social, and cultural life. Therefore, one could conveniently refer to development in multi-dimensional terms. That is, one cannot measure development by using only economic growth or by any other exclusive indicator, but development must involve both qualitative and quantitative changes of all aspects of human life.

The Impact of Corruption On Nigeria’s National Development

The damage leadership and corruption made on Nigeria and Nigerians are too severe. Such damage covers areas of political, economic, cultural, social and religious aspects of Nigeria as an independent state. **The political damage**

18. It is obvious that corruption has increased the bid for political participation among different parties of politicians. This has been gravitated by the free spoils of bad governance and quantum of money that is usually raided from the national treasury. In our society, the impact of corruption is often manifested through political intolerance, problems of accountability and transparency to the public, low level of democratic culture, principles of consultation and participation dialogue among others.

People from all walks of life venture in to politics not to serve the people, but for self enrichment. The implication is that, it will all be:

(a) A war among the selfish politicians to get the free ticket and license for the abuse of national treasure (b) It may give rise to more dangerous political thuggery (c) Ritualism and more political assassination (d) Corruption impedes democracy and the rule of law. In a democratic system, public institutions and offices may lose their legitimacy when they misuse their power for private interest. (e) Corruption may also result in negative consequences such as encoring cynicism and reducing interest of political participation (f) Political instability (g) Reducing political competition (f) Reducing the transparency of political decision making (g) Distorting political development and sustaining political activity based on patronage, clientelism and money, etc.

The economic damage

It is axiomatic that corruption is universal. But the evils of corruption depends on the level at which it is committed. The higher the level of corruption in a country the higher the level of economic epilepsy and economic underdevelopment. Some of the impacts of corruption on the national economy can be seen as: (a) it brings about unemployment, as money is devoured by political predators; institutions can not absorb and remunerate employees. (b) It widens the level of poverty among nationals, as leaders are selfish, and not after a better quality for the life of their people (c) It allows the domination of foreigners, of the national economy (d) Corruption reduces the level of national income generation (e) Corruption ensures perpetuation of economic underdevelopment, as areas and plans of economic advancement are ignored (f) It develops foreign economy at the expense of a national economy (g) It widens the gap between rich and poor (h) It reduces the level of wellrooted Professional and institutional think-tanks with focused objectives and adequate resources for performance.

The social Implication

The social consequences of corruption are intertwined with some of the economic factors. But some of the major impacts of corruption on the socio-cultural aspect of a nation may include the following:

(a) Illiteracy, as the government is not ready and the politicians are not after human development of the nation. Thus, the colossal amount of money embezzled, would leave the masses without the ability to attend schools. Even if they do, there would not be competent teachers, as the government can not pay the salaries of teachers. Even if they, do, the salary would be too meager for the teachers to survive, therefore, they resort to private schools where majority of the population can afford.

- (b) Armed robbery is promoted as a larger population of youths is being deprived to earn or benefit from the national fruits. They are unemployed and they need to enjoy all the necessary goods for serving humanity. They finally resort in to robbery in order to gratify their thirst for economic and social security.
- (c) Among the women prostitution is guaranteed. The female population is growing without education, no employment, with a poor standard of living. The male population is also poor and afraid to get married. The female population finally resorts in to prostitution to earn income.
- (d) The higher the level of prostitution in the society, the higher the level of disease spreading in the society. Awareness campaign will also be minimal, as the corrupt government can not provide an effective awareness to the people. The money given for the provision of awareness is also siphoned, and the population is darkened by illiteracy to be able to accept awareness campaign.
- (e) There will be general insecurity, as violence will be the order of the day. People are hungry, people are frustrated and people are angry. The result would be militancy, fundamentalism, kidnapping, assassination, etc. this, however, may emanate as a result of frustration-aggression, or carried out for economic gains.
- (f) Corruption may give rise to traffic in narcotics. This is engendered by the inability of the government to create jobs to the youths. A higher number of the youths may turn to illegal means of providing job for themselves and by themselves, and one of these areas is traffic in narcotics, as the youths are aware that one get rich easier in this type of business.
- (g) Another social implication of chronic corruption as that of Nigeria, is drug addiction. People are frustrated, jobless and alienated. They have no emotional ties and no sense of belonging. They may resort in to drug addiction.
- (h) Traffic in light weapons. The unemployed and those out of school may indulge in this type of illegal business of traffic in light weapons. This may be necessitated by their economic status and social insecurity. They may supply it to armed robbers, ethnically divided areas to aid ethnic conflicts; people may buy them cheaply in the name of self defense.
- (i) It may facilitate cultism on Nigerian campuses. Injustice, unequal treatment among the students, poverty in the side of the students gravitated by corruption may lead students to joining cult societies in order to make things easier for themselves. They may claim fighting injustice and corruption or try to find a new means to fit the system no matter how poor they are.

1.

Conclusion

Albeit, corruption is universal, a nation can not develop politically, economically and socially, without a healthy environment devoid of corruption. Corruption has done evil to Nigeria more than slavery, colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism. This is largely because, despite these evils, Nigeria had the opportunity to grow and develop as a nation, in other words, these evils have given us the opportunity to develop, but corruption will never allow a nation to develop. Under colonial domination, imperial hegemony, and neocolonialism, education was free, rail-roads available, peace among Nigerians, tradition fully respected. But in this contemporary corrupt political system, Nigerians are under-educated, healthcare facilities cumbersome, roads deplorable, unemployment rampant, crime, political assassination, favoritism and nepotism, and the worst of all, general insecurity.

Recommendation

With the realization that corruption is evil to the survival of socio economic and political formations, nation states have no option other than to take drastic actions on the menace. Some of the areas through which corruption can be ameliorated are recommended below:

There is the need to drastically interpret the constitution against corrupt officials found guilty of corruption. This is against the backdrop of the judicial system as well as the institutions responsible for prosecuting corrupt officials. If the laws are duly and clearly interpreted, other officials may not indulge themselves in the act of corruption.

Morality should not only be taught in religious institutions, but morality should be inculcated among youths in school and out of school. Teaching of moral values should be consolidated in schools of learning and moral orientations be given priority in the society.

A punitive law should be made in Nigeria against corrupt practices. Capital punishment and life imprisonment on any official found guilty of financial corruption by stealing the public fund of more than one million naira.

Contracts, policies and government programs should be planned and executed under rigorous monitoring and evaluation; Proper and sincere auditing and accountability.

The existence of clear separation of power among the three organs of government namely the executive, legislature and the judiciary is another strong means to fight corruption. The judiciary should not take it likely or compromise in cases dealing with corruption, and the executive or legislature should not interfere with judicial responsibility in dealing with corruption.

Corruption can be reduced by raising the living standard of the people. The poorer the people, the more cases and practices of corruption. The richer the people are, the lower the cases and practice of corruption.

Admissions in to universities, employment and promotion must be based on merit and qualification. An annual review of Nigerian workers and students should be considered, in order to check the sanctity of entry and level to level mobility among institutions in Nigeria.

The establishment of a sincere and honest institution to hear individual's reports and experiences on bribe by durace is imperative. This will reduce officers' thirst for bribery and corruption

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